

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000289

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, NEA/P, AND INR/R/MR

LONDON FOR TSOU

PARIS FOR ZEYA

USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH

FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR SILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KPAQ KMDR OIIP MU

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQI SECTARIANISM, MOSQUE BOMBINGS,

HAMAS POLICY

-----  
Iraqi Sectarianism  
-----

¶1. The government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" published an editorial on February 24 under the title "Stopping Turmoil in Iraq":

"It seems the civil strife between Iraqi Shiites and Sunnis that has long been warned about has finally happened, through the bombing of mosques. Multi-national forces have contributed to the problem, with the U.S. being the main cause because of its illegitimate war in Iraq. Thus the U.S. has a moral and legal responsibility to stop the violence in Iraq. At the same time, the incipient national government has an even greater duty to involve all communities in the political process and not marginalize anyone. For their part, religious leaders must calm the people and establish a dialogue to end this episode of violence in Iraq."

-----  
Mosque Bombing  
-----

¶2. Privately owned Arabic daily "Al-Watan" published an editorial on February 24, entitled "Pity on You, Iraq":

"Iraqis need to think hard about the causes and consequences of the mosque bombing. The attackers strategically selected sites that provoke religious sentiments and promote hatred...168 Sunni mosques were destroyed in revenge for the bombing of the Shiite Imams' tombs in Samarra...Iraqis must regain self control to save their lives. The country's crises are increasing, and could destroy Iraqi civilization."

-----  
Hamas Policy  
-----

¶3. "Oman" also carried an editorial on February 25, entitled "Israel and Its Racist Policy":

"Israel is continuing its arbitrary policies against the Palestinians by assassinating their political figures, establishing segregated roads, and blocking the Hamas government from forming. Unfortunately, the United States and the West not only support such policies, but have also ceased their financial aid to Palestine and have frozen negotiations on final status issues aimed at ending the Israeli-Palestinian problem. Under such circumstances, the Palestinians will continue their struggle by all available means, especially if they are internationally legitimate and supported by legal resolutions."

BALTIMORE